

21. (Once Amended) An isolated polypeptide selected from the group consisting of:
- a) a polypeptide comprising the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:5,
  - b) a polypeptide comprising a naturally occurring amino acid sequence at least 90% identical to the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:5, and
  - c) an immunogenic fragment of the polypeptide having the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:5.

22. (Once Amended) An isolated polypeptide of claim 21 comprising the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:5.

23. An isolated polynucleotide encoding a polypeptide of claim 21.

24. An isolated polynucleotide encoding a polypeptide of claim 22.

25. (Once Amended) An isolated polynucleotide of claim 24 comprising the polynucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:14.

26. A recombinant polynucleotide comprising a promoter sequence operably linked to a polynucleotide of claim 23.

27. A cell transformed with a recombinant polynucleotide of claim 26.

28. A method of producing a polypeptide of claim 21, the method comprising:
- a) culturing a cell under conditions suitable for expression of the polypeptide, wherein said cell is transformed with a recombinant polynucleotide, and said recombinant polynucleotide comprises a promoter sequence operably linked to a polynucleotide encoding the polypeptide of claim 21, and
  - b) recovering the polypeptide so expressed.

29. (Once Amended) A method of claim 28, wherein the polypeptide comprises the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:5.

30. An isolated antibody which specifically binds to a polypeptide of claim 21.

31. (Once Amended) An isolated polynucleotide selected from the group consisting of:

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- a) a polynucleotide comprising the polynucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:14,
  - b) a polynucleotide comprising a naturally occurring polynucleotide sequence at least 90% identical to the polynucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:14,
  - c) a polynucleotide complementary to a polynucleotide of a),
  - d) a polynucleotide complementary to a polynucleotide of b), and
  - e) an RNA equivalent of a)-d).

32. An isolated polynucleotide comprising at least 60 contiguous nucleotides of a polynucleotide of claim 31.

33. A method of detecting a target polynucleotide in a sample, said target polynucleotide having a sequence of a polynucleotide of claim 31, the method comprising:

- a) hybridizing the sample with a probe comprising at least 20 contiguous nucleotides comprising a sequence complementary to said target polynucleotide in the sample, and which probe specifically hybridizes to said target polynucleotide, under conditions whereby a hybridization complex is formed between said probe and said target polynucleotide or fragments thereof, and
- b) detecting the presence or absence of said hybridization complex, and, optionally, if present, the amount thereof.

34. A method of claim 33, wherein the probe comprises at least 60 contiguous nucleotides.

35. A method of detecting a target polynucleotide in a sample, said target polynucleotide having a sequence of a polynucleotide of claim 31, the method comprising:

- a) amplifying said target polynucleotide or fragment thereof using polymerase chain reaction amplification, and

- b) detecting the presence or absence of said amplified target polynucleotide or fragment thereof, and, optionally, if present, the amount thereof.

36. A composition comprising a polypeptide of claim 21 and a pharmaceutically acceptable excipient.

*316* 37. (Once Amended) A composition of claim 36, wherein the polypeptide comprises the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:5.

38. A method of screening a compound for effectiveness as an agonist of a polypeptide of claim 21, the method comprising:

- a) exposing a sample comprising a polypeptide of claim 21 to a compound, and
- b) detecting agonist activity in the sample.

39. A method of screening a compound for effectiveness as an antagonist of a polypeptide of claim 21, the method comprising:

- a) exposing a sample comprising a polypeptide of claim 21 to a compound, and
- b) detecting antagonist activity in the sample.

40. A method of screening for a compound that specifically binds to the polypeptide of claim 21, the method comprising:

- a) combining the polypeptide of claim 21 with at least one test compound under suitable conditions, and
- b) detecting binding of the polypeptide of claim 21 to the test compound, thereby identifying a compound that specifically binds to the polypeptide of claim 21.